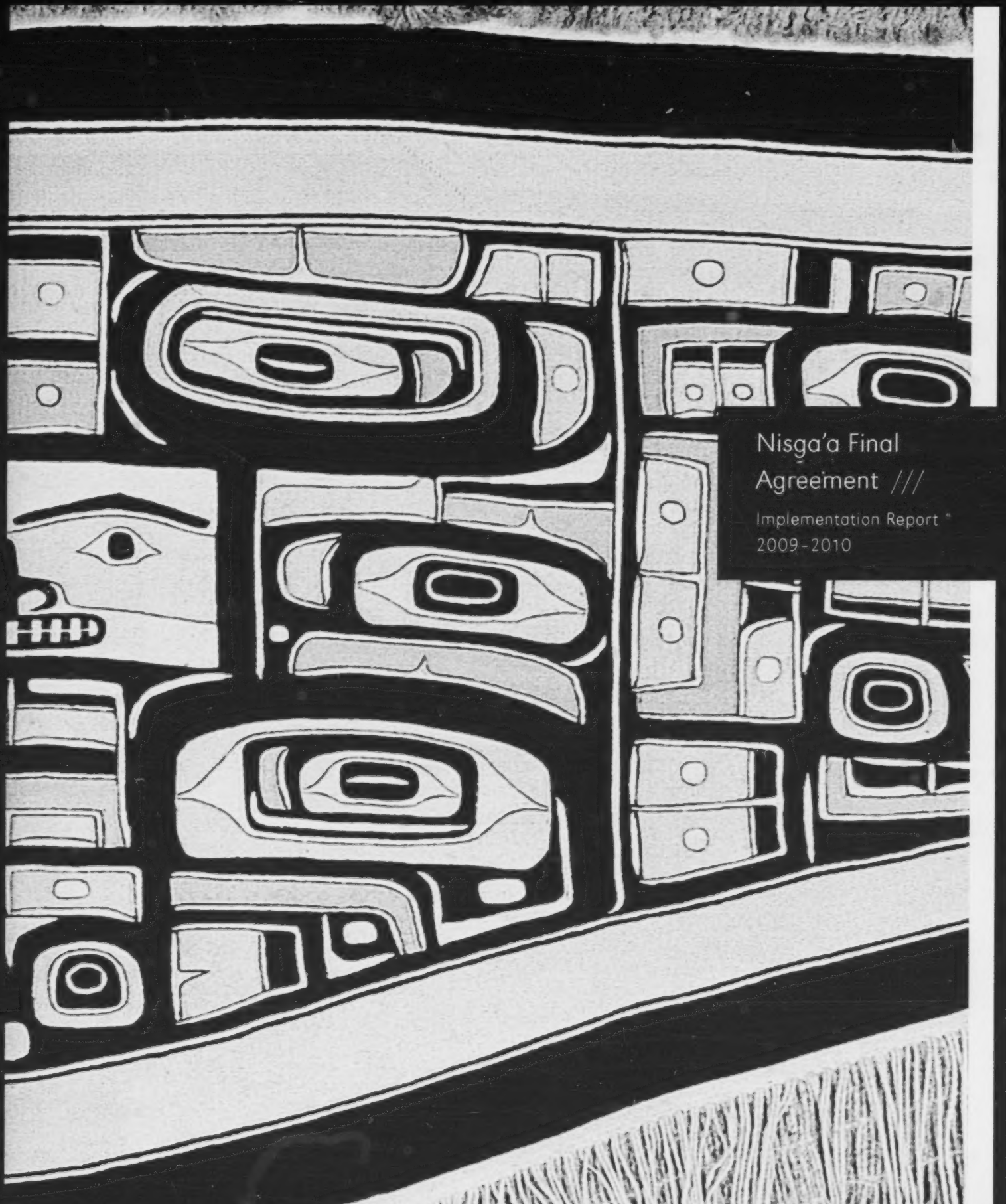


Nisga'a Final Agreement ///

Implementation Report 2009-2010

The Nisga'a Final Agreement (the Treaty) is British Columbia's first modern treaty. A landmark in the relationship between Canada and its First Nations peoples, the Treaty came into effect on May 11, 2000.

The governments of Canada, British Columbia, and the Nisga'a Nation are partners in the Nisga'a Final Agreement, which sets out Nisga'a Lands and the Nisga'a people's right of self-government. Because three governments share responsibility for the Treaty, an implementation committee was formed to provide a forum for the partners to discuss its implementation.

This report summarizes the progress made in the tenth year of the Nisga'a Final Agreement, from April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010.

About the cover image (detail)

GWIIS HALAYT (DANCING ROBE)

A gwiis halayt such as this could only be worn by Simgigat (Chiefs). The weaving of this type of "Chilkat" dancing robe originated with the Nisga'a. Each blanket is made from dyed mountain goat wool and cedar bark, and required as much as a year to complete. The complex design is an ayuukwa (crest) of a Nisga'a wilp (house). Acquired at Laygaits ap. 1905, likely from a Sim'oogit of Ank'idaa.

Hli gadihl Nisg̱a'a ahl
K̲'alii Aksim Lisims

Nisg̱a'a — People of the Nass River

OUR HOME

K̲'alii Aksim Lisims (the Nass River) flows through a land of sacred mountains and dense forests on Canada's Pacific Coast. The Nisg̱a'a people have lived in the Nass River Valley since before recorded time. Today, the Nisg̱a'a Nation includes more than 6,499 people residing in the Nisg̱a'a Villages of Ging̱olx, Lax̲g̱alts'ap, Gitwinksihlkw, New Aiyansh and outside of the Nass Valley in Terrace, Prince Rupert/Port Edward, Greater Vancouver, and across North America.

OUR TREATY

May 11, 2000, marked the end of a 113-year journey -- and the first steps in a new direction. On that date, the Effective Date of the Nisga'a Final Agreement (the Treaty), the *Indian Act* ceased to apply to Nisga'a people (except for the purpose of determining whether an individual is an "Indian"). For the first time in modern history, the Nisga'a people had the legal authority to conduct their own affairs. The Treaty recognizes Nisga'a Lands (2000 km²) and opens the door for joint economic initiatives in the development of the Nisga'a Nation's natural resources. An example of hope, trust, and cooperation, the Nisga'a Final Agreement is being studied by governments and Aboriginal peoples the world over.

OUR GOVERNMENT

The Nisga'a Final Agreement provides certainty with respect to the Nisga'a people's self-determination. The Nisga'a Nation is represented by Nisga'a Lisims Government (NLG) -- a modern, forward-thinking administration based on traditional culture and values. Nisga'a Government has the authority to pass laws on a broad range of matters. At the same time, Nisga'a lawmaking authority is concurrent with federal and provincial authority.

Proud British Columbians and Canadians, Nisga'a citizens are responsible for building and maintaining their own institutions. Designed to assure democracy, transparency, and accountability, Nisga'a Government is comprised of NLG and the four Nisga'a Village Governments. NLG's President, Chairperson, Secretary-Treasurer, and Chairperson of the Council of Elders are elected at large by Nisga'a citizens. The elected members of each Nisga'a Village Government are elected by the residents of each Nisga'a Village. Wilp Si'ayuukhl Nisga'a (WSN), the government's legislative assembly, enacts laws within the Nisga'a Nation's jurisdiction. These laws make up the Nisga'a Registry of Laws. WSN is also responsible for approving the operational budget of the Nisga'a Nation.

OUR VISION

"Sayt-K'ilim-Goot: one heart, one path, one nation." Sayt-K'ilim-Goot serves as a compass, providing clarity and direction. NLG is committed to ensuring its programs, services, and day-to-day operations reflect this vision.

In the spirit of Sayt-K'ilim-Goot, the Nisga'a Nation is a place where:

- our Ayuuk, language, and culture are the foundation of our identity
- learning is a way of life
- we strive for sustainable prosperity and self-reliance
- we inspire trust and understanding through effective communication, and
- our governance and services evolve to meet our people's needs.

Ńilhl g̱an aluut'a on a naa ńuuḿ wil dip hooxhl ayuug̱aḿ, algax̱aḿ, ganhl lip wilaa looḿ /

Our Ayuuk̲, language, and culture are the foundation of our identity

Nisg̱a'a Lisims Government is committed to protecting and promoting Nisg̱a'a culture in all aspects of society. Ayuukhl Nisg̱a'a — the ancient laws and customs of the Nisg̱a'a people — informs, guides, and inspires Nisg̱a'a culture.

The Nisg̱a'a Constitution provides that Simgigat (chiefs), Sigidimhaanak̲ (matriarchs), and respected Nisg̱a'a elders advise Nisg̱a'a Government on matters relating to the traditional values of the Nisg̱a'a Nation through the Council of Elders, and that Nisg̱a'a Government must respect and encourage the use of the Nisg̱a'a language and the practice of Nisg̱a'a culture.

"We must take care of our own way of life — which is based on the Nisg̱a'a Ayuuk̲ — for we have a responsibility to ensure that it is passed on, as it should be, to our children who follow behind us." — Ayuukhl Nisg̱a'a

AYUUK̲HL NISG̱A'A DEPARTMENT

The Ayuukhl Nisg̱a'a Department (AND) protects, preserves, and promotes Nisg̱a'a language, culture, and history. This is achieved through:

- development and maintenance of the catalogue system for Nisg̱a'a archives
- resource and administrative support for the Council of Elders and various government committees
- liaison and negotiations with the Royal BC Museum, Royal Ontario Museum, Smithsonian Institute
- research and production of books on key aspects of Nisg̱a'a culture, and
- supporting other NLG languages and culture initiatives.

AND's long-term goals:

- use the Nisg̱a'a language as a working language of Nisg̱a'a Government
- establish a Nisg̱a'a National Archives open to Nisg̱a'a citizens and the world
- protect and enhance all Nisg̱a'a heritage sites
- safeguard Nisg̱a'a Lands and resources with Nisg̱a'a volunteers
- connect Nisg̱a'a youth and elders through meaningful programs.

During the reporting period, AND continued to prepare for the return of Nisg̱a'a artifacts and the opening of the Nisg̱a'a Museum.

NISG̱A'A MUSEUM

Together with the Nisg̱a'a Foundation (a registered charitable society), NLG is building a Nisg̱a'a Museum. When complete, the 10,000 square foot facility will feature a floor plan that emulates a traditional Nisg̱a'a feast bowl and a soaring roofline that resembles both a traditional Nisg̱a'a canoe and long house. The only Class A climate controlled gallery space of its kind in northwest British Columbia, the museum will house Nisg̱a'a artifacts and be a permanent place for Nisg̱a'a people and visitors to experience the rich life and legacy of Nisg̱a'a culture. The project is being funded entirely through the Nisg̱a'a Foundation and NLG.

Groundbreaking for the museum building took place at Laxgalts'ap in July 2009, and construction continued throughout the reporting period, including: foundation, framing, roofing, electrical, and mechanical work. Where possible, local contractors were hired and Nisga'a workers employed.

During the reporting period, AND worked with Traditions Consulting to create the museum's overall narrative structure. The return of Nisga'a artifacts is central to the museum exhibit and this story will be relayed to visitors through a thematic storyline, "From Darkness to Light," which showcases the life and legacy of Nisga'a ancestors. A draft was made available to the public for review and comment before approval by NLG executive. AND continues to collect recommendations and comments from the public.

NLG also began the process of seeking a Museum Director to manage administration, fundraising, coordination of artifact repatriation, and the development of operational and marketing plans.

ANHLUUT'UKWSIM LAXMIHL ANGWINGA'ASANSKWHL NISGA'A
NISGA'A MEMORIAL LAVA BED PARK

Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park — the first provincial park managed jointly by a First Nation and British Columbia — offers interpretation of spectacular natural features and a dramatic introduction to Nisga'a culture. The Nisga'a alkali basalt flow is one of the youngest and most accessible volcanic features in the province. With a 16-site vehicle campground, picnic areas, visitor information centre, boat launches, and short hikes, the park offers visitors a wide variety of activities and a chance to learn more about Nisga'a culture and the natural history of the region. British Columbia funds an annual agreement for park services and maintenance (approximately $49,000).

Huxwdii adigwil yukwhl siwilaaksim̓ /

Learning is a way of life

The Nisga'a Nation is committed to improving its education system, helping adult learners gain more training, and encouraging all Nisga'a to engage in lifelong learning to help build the economy and strengthen Nisga'a society.

On Nisga'a Lands, primary and secondary students are served by School District #92 (Nisga'a), part of British Columbia's publicly funded school system. The school board consists of four Nisga'a members (representing each Nisga'a Village) and one non-Nisga'a member. Nisga'a Lisims Government works in partnership with the School District to foster and protect Nisga'a language and culture while seeking to raise the standard of education for all Nass Valley youth.

Compared to the provincial average, Nisga'a youth represent a higher proportion of the population in their communities. NLG continues to plan for the current and future educational needs of Nisga'a youth, so that they will be fully prepared to participate in the economy.

Post-Secondary enrollment and completion rates of Nisga'a citizens (who were eligible to graduate), 2009–2010

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION	Enrollment		Completion rate %	
	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE
University	58	31	66%	44%
College (public/private)	75	48	33%	20%
Open Learning Agency	0	0	00%	00%
Institutes	6	3	66%	66%
Private Post-Secondary Institutions	5	5	20%	80%
TOTAL	**144**	**87**	**47%**	**34%**

During the reporting period, British Columbia allocated to School District #92 (Nisga'a) a total of $7 million in operating funding for the 2009/10 school year — equal to the previous year's allocation despite an enrolment decline of 4%. That total included $2.1 million in Unique Geographic Factors funding (to recognize the additional costs and challenges of operating small schools in remote areas), and it included $400,000 in Aboriginal Education funding for culturally appropriate educational programs and services to support the success of Aboriginal students. In addition, the Ministry of Education worked with School District #92 (Nisga'a) on the yearly First Nation recovery process.

In addition, British Columbia funded the Nisga'a Early Learning Leadership Team to help School District #92 (Nisga'a) build capacity for early learning. Over fiscal 2008/09 and 2009/10, $60,000 was provided to support the program in coordinating local early learning efforts. To accommodate School District #92 (Nisga'a), British Columbia amended section 16 of the standard contract, giving the district full ownership of all materials produced.

Eligible organizations on Nisga'a Lands also receive gaming grants and gaming event licenses from British Columbia. Nisga'a Elementary Secondary School has received a total of $73,500 since 2001 ($2,690 during the reporting period). During the reporting period, School District #92 (Nisga'a) also received $80,824 in CommunityLink payments, which helps provide services such as breakfast and lunch programs, community school programs, school-based support workers, and counselling for at-risk children and youth.

Ginger Gosnell-Myers

Tribe: Wolf / Community: Vancouver

I'm originally from New Aiyansh, but I've been living in Vancouver for over ten years. There are over 1,500 Nisga'a living in the Vancouver area. I feel like our urban community is becoming stronger and more cohesive. Through the Nisga'a Ts'amiks Society (Vancouver's Nisga'a Urban Local), we're more of a visible presence in the city and we've been given more opportunities to come together because of some of the resources from the Treaty.

I work as the public engagement director with the Environics Institute on the Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study -- the largest study of its kind in Canada. It uses research as a means to give a voice to groups that you don't necessarily hear from in research or policy. It's something I'm really proud of because I was the project manager for the study and implemented it across the country. This year, I also finished my masters in public policy at SFU.

Nisga'a youth definitely think of ourselves as being different from other Aboriginal people because we no longer have that association with the *Indian Act* or the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. We think more independently and recognize that we have to develop more opportunities, motivation, and experience ourselves. We no longer have the tax-free status offered to First Nations under the *Indian Act*. I feel like there is a growing sense of autonomy among Nisga'a people and I'm very proud of that.

I also think that we need to be more creative in how we govern ourselves. In Vancouver, we have so many talented, experienced, educated Nisga'a working in various organizations, running companies, getting exciting degrees. Other First Nations have reached out to this young and dynamic population that has learned how to succeed outside of the boundaries of their reserves. They are making space for them and these young people are transforming their communities based on the talents of the people they are able to bring back. We need to focus on that, and on other important things -- like economic development, and making sure our kids graduate and are prepared to face the world.

My husband is Cree-Dene, from Alberta, and he just doesn't get it. We had to sign and extinguish certain rights afforded through the *Indian Act*, such as the exemption from paying tax on Indian lands. My husband and friends believe that we ceded a lot of traditional territories... But they don't see the opportunities in our being on our own. We are now living in a world where nothing is certain. The opportunities that we have are the opportunities we make for ourselves as a nation. If we want more land, we're going to have to buy more land. If we want economic development, we are really going to have to take some chances and go for it. They don't get how liberating it is to say, "I'm no longer an *Indian Act* Indian." And other Nisga'a youth I speak to are saying the same thing. I'm hoping that feeling grows.

"The opportunities that we have are the opportunities we make for ourselves as a nation."

*The views expressed by individual Nisga'a citizens do not necessarily represent the views of the governments of Canada, British Columbia, or Nisga'a Lisims Government.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute (WWNI) offers post-secondary programs in Nisga'a communities and urban centres. Serving both Nisga'a and non-Nisga'a students since 1993, WWNI partners with a number of public institutions for the delivery of programs, including:

- Master of Arts Cohort
- Bachelor of Arts degree completion in the Nass Valley
- Grade 12 achievement
- University/college preparation
- Vocational and technical training, and
- Continuing education programs.

Since the Effective Date, 97 university academic students have graduated from WWNI, including:

- 27 Bachelor of Arts degrees in First Nations Studies
- 2 Bachelor of Science (most coursework through WWNI)
- 1 Bachelor of Commerce (most coursework through WWNI)
- 5 Nisga'a Language Certificates
- 33 General First Nations Studies Certificates
- 29 Nisga'a Studies Certificates

Note: students can earn more than one academic certificate at a time.

During the reporting period, British Columbia provided $280,000 to Nisga'a Lisims Government under the Nisga'a Nation Fiscal Financing Agreement (FFA) to support the delivery of post-secondary education and training programs at WWNI. In addition, British Columbia provided $307,000 through a federation agreement between WWNI and the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC). Over and above funding provided through the FFA, Canada provided $245,000 in targeted funding to support post-secondary education special projects managed by WWNI.

Nisga'a Government provides financial support to select Nisga'a students pursuing post-secondary education throughout British Columbia and North America.

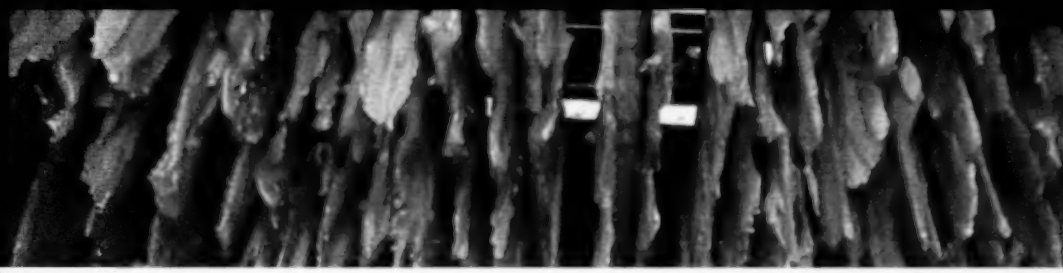
UNBC WILP WILXO'OSKWHL NISGA'A ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION

The UNBC Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Endowment Foundation (a registered charitable society) was established in order to build a secure, independent funding base for WWNI's capital projects, student scholarships and bursaries, faculty and staff development, and other priorities.

From its inception, WWNI has received strong support from both the Nisga'a people and British Columbia. In a demonstration of support, the Nisga'a business community initially contributed $100,000, and later made a $250,000 donation to the Nisga'a Endowment Fund (as it was then known). This was generously matched by British Columbia and UNBC. The endowment has continued to grow under the UNBC Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Endowment Foundation.

UNBC Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Endowment Foundation. Annual fund value (on March 31).

Nisga'a Economy /



Sgihl gandi'akhla'amskw loom̓, gan wil dip dixyugwihl ha'am wil /

We strive for sustainable prosperity and self-reliance

A fully integrated part of the economy of northwest British Columbia, the Nisga'a economy shares in both the region's opportunities and challenges. The primary industries in the Nass Valley are fishing and forestry. Seasonal resource industries are complemented by full-time employment in the government, education, and healthcare sectors. Since May 11, 2000, infrastructure improvements have brought new jobs and skills while tourism and telecommunications offer the promise of expanding and diversifying employment opportunities.

"Creating wealth – the capability and resources – guides our decision about the appropriate course of action. This will help us achieve the freedom to stand on our own." – Ayuukhl Nisga'a

NISGA'A ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Through the department of Nisga'a Economic Development, NLG provides Nisga'a entrepreneurs and organizations with access to business information, tools, and financial capital. NLG is investing in research and development, infrastructure, strategic partnerships, and a variety of projects to stimulate the Nisga'a economy, support Nisga'a citizens, and promote a new era of economic prosperity and sustainability.

Since the Effective Date of the Treaty, NLG has worked to lay a foundation for prosperity and self-determination through collaboration with Nisga'a Village Governments and the Nisga'a Urban Locals. This effort is resulting in a shared vision for sustainable economic prosperity. In pursuit of this goal, a commitment was made during the reporting period to develop a five-year strategic economic plan and conduct new research to determine the direction of future initiatives.

NASS AREA STRATEGY

While the Nisga'a Nation welcomes economic development and is indeed "open for business," under no circumstances will Nisga'a citizens accept a trade-off between environmental protection and economic development. That's why NLG has created a strategy to respond to proposed resource development in the Nass Area. The strategy's objective is to ensure that development proceeds only when all Treaty rights have been respected – including those rights dealing with economic, social, cultural, and environmental interests.

Whether these projects include equity ownership, revenue sharing, royalties, contracting opportunities, direct employment, or joint ventures, a basic principle of the strategy is that only environmentally sound projects will receive the support of NLG. This strategy will help ensure Nisga'a resources continue to support the Nisga'a Nation for generations to come.

NISGA'A BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT FUND

With the goal of helping Nisga'a entrepreneurs compete in the global marketplace, the Nisga'a Business Development Fund provides advice, services, and funding. Recipients include both new and established Nisga'a enterprises with promising products or services targeted at a variety of market sectors.

Funds are provided for business support and capacity building, feasibility studies and development costs, and capital investments for business infrastructure, and are intended to help applicants leverage funds from lending institutions and or other equity programs. Tourism projects, retail and home-based businesses, small industry development, and corporate projects have all received investments. During the reporting period, eight projects were approved totaling $530,468.

NISGA'A NATION 360° APPROACH TO TRAINING

Launched during the reporting period, the Nisga'a Nation 360° Approach to Training program utilizes partnerships with employers to offer work experience, including: pre-employment training, technical training, work-place training, employment, and follow-up assessment.

VOICES OF NISGA'A CITIZENS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

During the reporting period, a new economic plan was developed to focus on sustainable prosperity and self-reliance. Unlike traditional economic development plans, which call for investments in infrastructure and marketing in the hopes that new businesses will emerge, the Voices of Nisga'a Citizens Implementation Plan focuses on ways to facilitate the use of infrastructure already in place on Nisga'a Lands.

LABOUR MARKET PARTNERSHIPS

Under the Labour Market Partnerships funding agreement, British Columbia invested $277,253 during the reporting period to examine future demand for labour and skills, availability of jobs, and potential for expanding employment and self-employment opportunities on Nisga'a Lands. This included assessing skills currently available in Nisga'a communities, as well as forecasting the skills that will be needed in the medium to long-term future.

Percentage of Population Receiving Employment Insurance Benefits

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Nisga'a	6.7	4.3	7.2	7.3	8.1	8.3	6.3	3.8	5.9	5.6	7.6
B.C.	2.8	2.2	2.8	3.0	3.1	2.9	2.5	2.3	2.4	1.2	2.8

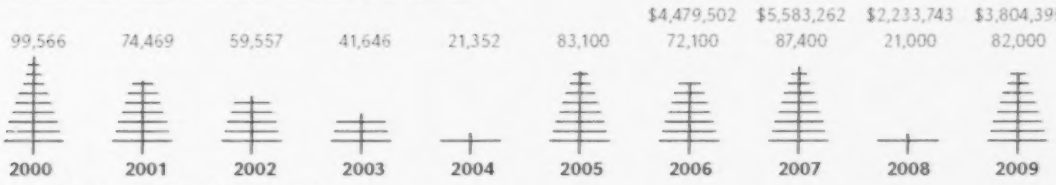
*Assessment reflects beneficiaries as a percentage of the population age 19-64 for September of each year. Source: Human Resources & Social Development Canada Administrative Files and BC Stats Population Estimate.

DEPARTMENT OF FOREST RESOURCES

NLG manages Nisga'a forests to protect this natural inheritance and to provide employment for Nisga'a people. Ecological sustainability is a prime consideration in the development and approval of all operations within Nisga'a Lands, and the *Nisga'a Forest Act* sets high standards to maintain biodiversity. NLG also manages all land and forest resources on Nisga'a Lands, including non-timber resources. Pine mushrooms, a popular delicacy in Asia, are a valuable resource found in Nisga'a forests and are harvested seasonally.

Although tough times continue for British Columbia's forest industry, two factors have allowed logging on Nisga'a Lands to continue: good cedar markets and the viability of saw log exports. The Annual Allowable Cut on Nisga'a Lands is 130,000 cubic metres. NLG collects a silviculture levy to ensure reforestation of cut-blocks is funded over the long term. The current fund is approximately $1 million.

Cubic Metres of Timber Harvested Since 2000



*Dollar value of timber sales reported beginning in 2006.

Melvin Stevens

Tribe: Wolf / Community: Laxgalts'ap

People are talking about an economic downturn? Actually, this has been one of our busiest years. We should have a recession more often.

I'm the general manager of the Laxgalts'ap Forest Corporation. In the past, we were just selling raw logs with no secondary manufacturing. Now we're looking at niche markets, high-end products, in order to diversify in the industry when the raw log market goes under. That way, we won't be sitting idle, waiting for the markets to bounce back. We're going into other products, so we can make use of the fiber.

Our log home building program is now in its third year. It's an apprentice program, which will certify some of our log builders by the fourth year, and then turn it into a business so we can take it out to market. We will have samples of the homes here in the village. We've started up a cedar shingle mill, selling south of the border to the eastern seaboard. That's just the first phase, the second phase entails the kiln-dried wood so we can get into value-added products. One of our customers, Timbertone, comes up whenever we have the fiber to purchase. They make guitars and violins that are sold all over the world.

The Treaty should be the main tool that all Nisga'a use for progressing. The lives of Nisga'a people have improved somewhat under the Treaty, but there is still a long way to go. In some ways, the Treaty has helped strengthen the culture. There are more cultural activities and events. We have a lot of young people involved in Nisga'a art carving and in our traditional arts. Even the way of life – our feasts, and such. This is something we've never seen before. Our culture needs to stay strong, and the Treaty has helped this process. I'm pretty sure that Nisga'a youth are optimistic about their future. Now, it's up to them whether they move forward.

The biggest negative I see is the bureaucracy. It's better to have local control, that's one thing, but I think we would be further ahead if we weren't regulated so much. I've always said that the Treaty is a book of opportunities, not a book of guarantees, and we should be working towards capitalizing on the opportunities.

Has the Treaty been worth it? By all means it has. We are no longer wards of the crown, where everything was done through the Department of Indian Affairs. Today, we are out of that grasp and we can make our own legislation to have control and to enable us to move forward. I definitely foresee better prospects for our people – provided that our government changes its bureaucratic rules. As far as the Nisga'a Nation, I see our leadership role continuing, by being role models, by sharing our experiences with other First Nations – both the good and the bad.

"I've always said that the Treaty is a book of opportunities, not a book of guarantees, and we should be working towards capitalizing on the opportunities."

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FORESTRY COMMITTEE

During the reporting period, the Nisga'a/British Columbia Forest Service Forestry Committee met twice to share information and discuss strategies for forest management activities adjacent to Nisga'a Lands. Woodlot License W0141 was cancelled and British Columbia and NLG began exploratory discussions regarding the potential purchase of W0141 by NLG.

PLANTING AND SURVEYS

During the reporting period, Lisims Forest Resources planted portions of six cut-blocks with 16,010 seedlings. In addition, Lisims Forest Resources completed the following surveys.

2009 Silviculture Survey Results

Cut-blocks Surveyed	Total Area Surveyed	Area Free Growing	Area Satisfactorily Restocked	No Further Treatment
21	699 ha	510 ha	128 ha	61 ha
	100%	73%	18%	9%

SITE DECONTAMINATION

During the reporting period, New Aiyansh Village Government and Northwest Response Ltd. continued to remove debris from Ksedin Camp. Four soil decontamination cycles were completed. The last of the debris was removed and the site was re-sloped to allow for proper drainage. Between 2006 and 2009, 169 dump truck loads of debris and garbage were removed. The site has been seeded with grass. In addition, final soil decontamination and soil sampling were completed at Ginlulak log dump and a work crew was hired to clean up debris from four abandoned campsites (used by mushroom harvesters) located on Crown Land.

FOREST HEALTH

Aerial surveys were undertaken during the reporting period to locate trees attacked by mountain pine beetle. Over the winter, damaged trees were located, felled, and burned. Lisims Forest Resources worked on both Nisga'a Lands and adjacent Crown Land. Two additional contractors worked the region between Kalum Lake and Sand Lake.

PROVINCIAL FUNDING

In 2003, following the bankruptcy of New Skeena Forest Products, British Columbia assumed responsibility for completing unfulfilled treaty obligations. The work involved replanting cut-blocks, maintaining roads, and decommissioning two abandoned work sites. During the reporting period, British Columbia invested the following on forest management activities on Nisga'a Lands (under the "Nisga'a Project"):

Project Planning & Administration $0	**Maintain or deactivate secondary provincial roads** $85,658	**Silviculture surveys** $36,125	**Planting** $17,163
Pile burning $6,844	**Site clean-up (Ksedin Camp & Ginlulak log dump)** $89,771	**Clean-up mushroom pickers camps** $2,940	**Forest Health (mountain pine beetle)** $97,102*
	TOTAL $334,603		

*Amount shown for Forest Health includes only Nisga'a Project funds. Additional monies spent were from Ministry funds.

FOREST PRACTICES BOARD

In 2007, New Skeena Forest Products was found to have been in significant non-compliance in its operations on Nisga'a Lands. British Columbia is responsible to take its own actions in relation to unaddressed harvest clean-up, silviculture survey, road maintenance, and road deactivation obligations in order to reduce the potential for future significant environmental impacts on Nisga'a Lands due to New Skeena activities. During the reporting period, the

Forest Practices Board released its final report "Follow-up Review of Government's Performance in Addressing New Skeena Forest Products Obligations on Nisga'a Lands." The board commended British Columbia for its commitment to, and cooperation with NLG in identifying and addressing New Skeena's obligations.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM

During the reporting period, Canada and British Columbia funded a project on Nisga'a Lands to create immediate employment during the economic downturn. Through the federal Job Opportunities Program, the Gitxat'in Development Corporation was contracted to hire workers and restore lands adjacent to the Village of Laxgalts'ap. Work included stump removal, pathway clearing, re-establishment of the riparian ecosystem, and re-establishment of historical interpretive trails. Trail and stream restoration work will aid in the improvement of water flow and wildlife habitat. Canada contributed $349,328 and British Columbia contributed $87,332 for a project total of $436,660.

In addition, NLG's Department of Forest Resources undertook juvenile spacing and stand level management of approximately 300 hectares of forest land. This work was completed while maintaining habitat features such as the variety and quality of the animal and plant life in the area. Fifteen displaced resource workers were employed through this project, which was funded ($470,000) by British Columbia.

DEPARTMENT OF RESOURCE ENFORCEMENT

During the reporting period, the Department of Resource Enforcement, Directorate of Fisheries and Wildlife, and the Directorate of Lands and Resources worked together to enforce Nisga'a procedures, policies, and laws under the *Fisheries and Wildlife Act*, *Nisga'a Forest Act*, and *Nisga'a Offence Act*. Together, they committed six personnel to the Department of Resource Enforcement team.

With the goal of protecting and preserving of the region's natural resources, NLG's Department of Resource Enforcement works with Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and British Columbia's Conservation Service to ensure that all Nisga'a, provincial, and federal laws are enforced on Nisga'a Lands. Federal Fisheries Officers have been instrumental in providing guidance and assistance in the compliance of Nisga'a Fisheries legislation. During the reporting period, several joint Nisga'a/DFO patrols were conducted in the Nass Area. A coordinated and increased enforcement presence is being seen on Nisga'a Lands, including consistent uniforms and logos, as well as enforcement policies, procedures, and standards. Constant communication is maintained between enforcement departments and agencies. In addition, a more visible and coordinated enforcement presence is planned for the upcoming mushroom and hunting seasons.

NISGA'A FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

One of the healthiest river systems in the world, K'alii Aksim Lisims (the Nass) is the spawning grounds of five species of wild salmon, steelhead, and oolichan. NLG and Canada manage the Nass River salmon fishery to preserve the resource, provide for Nisga'a citizens, and support a modern, sustainable fishing industry.

Facilitated through the Joint Fisheries Management Committee (comprised of representatives from Canada, British Columbia, and NLG) the Nisga'a Fisheries Management Program utilizes fish wheels and other technologies on the Nass River for salmon monitoring, tagging, and data collection, and conducts stock assessments on a variety of species throughout the Nass Area. NLG works with British Columbia to manage the non-salmon sport fishery.

The successful renegotiation of the Fiscal Financing Agreement in 2008, combined with the continued stability of the Lisims Trust, has resulted in long-term certainty for the fisheries management and stock assessment activities conducted by Nisga'a Fisheries. For example, during the reporting period, the Zolzap Creek coho assessment program was reinstated after a seven-year hiatus. This study provides important information on survival and harvest in all fisheries (Alaska and British Columbia) critical to Nass River coho.

Salmon Harvested since 2000 (individual fish caught)

	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Chinook	Revenue†
2000*	54,734	–	–	–	–	$900,000
2001*	37,833	–	–	–	–	$386,126
2002	87,918	2,425	–	–	–	$833,781
2003	85,284	10,317	–	–	–	$984,708
2004	91,426	10,294	–	–	–	$1,141,930
2005	112,778	14,762	–	–	–	$665,556
2006^	62,422	5,261	2,912	935	1,896	$919,866
2007^	34,076	6,354	3,760	719	2,440	$616,051
2008^	17,728	793	3,438	276	–	$206,126
2009^	29,017	35	21,822	501	–	$304,161

*In 2000 and 2001, only sockeye were harvested.
^Starting in 2006, all harvested salmon species are included.
†Revenue to the local economy.

LISIMS FISHERIES CONSERVATION TRUST

The Nisga'a Fisheries Management Program applies the highest standards in the areas of conservation and environmental protection to ensure a healthy, productive aquatic ecosystem for the benefit of present and future generations. This commitment is ensured, in part, by the Lisims Fisheries Conservation Trust. Trustees appointed by NLG and Canada administer the trust, and recommendations from the Joint Fisheries Management Committee are taken into account in sponsoring projects, programs, and activities that are in keeping with the trust's objectives. The trust promotes conservation and protection of Nass Area fish species, facilitates sustainable management, and supports Nisga'a participation in fishery stewardship for the benefit of all Canadians.

Investment Status of Lisims Trust 2000–2009

	Net asset value	Disbursement		Net asset value	Disbursement
Dec 31/00	$13,726,993	$0	Dec 31/05	$14,857,367	$600,000
Dec 31/01	$13,722,641	$0	Dec 31/06	$15,586,894	$600,000
Dec 31/02	$12,302,969	$0	Dec 31/07	$15,646,909	$550,000
Dec 31/03	$12,211,358	$0	Dec 31/08	$12,234,637	$0
Dec 31/04	$13,371,869	$313,000	Dec 31/09	$14,391,575	$550,000

NASS EARNS "SENTINEL STOCK" RECOGNITION

The Nass River continues to provide for healthy salmon stocks and sustainable fisheries while other major river systems on Canada's Pacific coast suffer from low salmon returns, tight budgets, and cancelled fisheries. During the reporting period, the Nass remained open to Nisga'a and commercial sockeye fishing while the Fraser and Skeena rivers were either closed or severely restricted.

The health of the Nass River continues to garner international acclaim. During the reporting period, the upper Nass River Chinook salmon stock was recognized by the Pacific Salmon Commission as a "Sentinel Stock" critical to the Pacific Salmon Treaty between Canada and the United States. Through this recognition, Nisga'a Fisheries has been awarded five years of funding ($100,000 per year, conditional upon achieving an accurate population estimate) to enhance its ability to estimate the abundance of these very important Chinook populations. Part of the funding will go to improving efforts at counting Chinook at key spawning locations (including Meziadin, Kwinageese, and Damdochax).

Escapement goals for all other salmon species returning to the Nass River were also achieved. However, the low abundance of chum salmon returning to the Nass Area remains a concern and Nisga'a Fisheries has encouraged DFO to eliminate commercial harvests of Nass Area chum salmon so that the stocks can rebuild. Nisga'a Fisheries is currently working with DFO to develop a full rebuilding strategy for Nass Area chum.

Nisga'a Fisheries continues to enjoy the support of the Sierra Club of Canada for its management of the Nass River.

ABALONE WATCH & YOUTH STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Abalone were once an abundant and important part of both the Nisga'a diet and economy. Since the late 1970s, however, abalone stocks have been in serious decline in British Columbia. In 2007, Nisga'a Fisheries developed a Community Action Plan with help from community members and its partners (DFO, Environment Canada, and Oceanlink/Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre). The long-term goal of the Community Action Plan is to restore the abalone population to a level that supports a community food fishery. The Action Plan includes:

- the promotion of stewardship of abalone in north coast communities by raising awareness and encouraging Coast Watch participation
- the transfer of traditional and scientific knowledge about abalone and conservation recovery principles to Nisga'a youth, and
- marine patrols to monitor and report signs of illegal harvest to both Nisga'a Fisheries and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

An important part of that effort is the Nisga'a Youth Coast Watch Community Action Plan developed by Nisga'a Fisheries. During the reporting period, 24 youth, representing each Nisga'a Village and Urban Local, participated in a two-week intensive camp and were introduced to themes ranging from marine conservation and species at risk, to biodiversity and community leadership. Among Nisga'a youth, there is now a greater understanding that — in addition to oolichan, chum salmon, and glass sponge reefs — abalone are in need of their protection.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Together with its Treaty partners, NLG provides advice about wildlife management and harvesting within the 16,101 km² Nass Wildlife Area. British Columbia uses this information to establish allowable harvests for designated species and approve the annual Nass Wildlife Management Plan. Under the Nisga'a Final Agreement, moose, mountain goat, and grizzly bear have been identified as designated species for which there are specific Nisga'a allocations. NLG has implemented a permit system to manage the harvest of designated species by Nisga'a citizens. Through the Fiscal Financing Agreement, British Columbia provides $20,000 annually to NLG for wildlife management.

"We must take care of this Earth — all the animals, every stream in the valley — and this land on which you and I live." — Ayuukhl Nisga'a

INFRASTRUCTURE

Since 2000, British Columbia has invested $52 million to upgrade and pave Nisga'a Highway 113 from Lava Lake to New Aiyansh, Nass Camp, and Laxgalts'ap — connecting the Nisga'a Nation to North America's road network. In addition, Canada, British Columbia, and the Nisga'a Nation together invested $34 million to construct a new 29-km seal-coated highway from Laxgalts'ap to Gingolx, which was completed in 2005 and then paved in 2007. These investments in transportation infrastructure are improving the lives of Nisga'a people, bringing new visitors, and increasing access for the shipment of Nisga'a fish, seafood, and forest products.

Infrastructure projects undertaken during the reporting period include:

- paving of local streets in Laxgalts'ap
- construction continued on two recreation centres (Laxgalts'ap and Gingolx)
- construction of the Nisga'a Museum (final stages), and
- approval of a Waste Management Strategy for Nisga'a Lands.

Canada provided $2.3 million in targeted funding to support various housing and infrastructure projects on Nisga'a Lands. British Columbia confirmed that several single-lane bridges in the Nass Valley will be replaced over time, in a priority determined by assessment against overall provincial bridge priorities. It is expected that the first of these bridges, the Diksangiik Bridge, will be replaced in 2011.

NORTHWEST TRANSMISSION LINE

During the reporting period, a working group was established to develop a plan for Employment, Training, and Procurement for the Northwest Transmission Line project – a 344-km, 287 kV transmission line between Skeena Substation (near Terrace) and a new substation to be built near Bob Quinn Lake. While NLG worked to maximize any potential employment and training opportunities, it also participated in a rigorous environmental assessment of the proposed project.

NLG has incurred costs related to evaluating potential impacts of the project, and may incur further costs over the course of 2010. On behalf of the British Columbia Transmission Corporation, BC Hydro provided capacity funding to NLG in relation to some of their expenses on this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

Canada and British Columbia undertake environmental assessments of projects that may impact Nisga'a Lands or interests and consult NLG in this process. NLG actively participates in these assessments or undertakes its own environmental review. During the reporting period, environmental assessments were undertaken on numerous proposed projects, including: the Northwest Transmission Line (NTL), the Kitsault Mine, the Syntaris Hydropower project, and the Kerr-Sulphurets Mitchell Mine. For each of these proposals, Nisga'a Lands and Resources staff, along with Nisga'a Fish and Wildlife staff, participated in technical working groups tasked with evaluating both the environmental and Treaty impacts. Of these projects, only the NTL application reached a formal review during the reporting period. The environmental assessment of the NTL application is expected to be completed in the near future.

The environmental assessment process for several of these projects has resulted in differing interpretations of applicable sections of the Treaty by British Columbia and NLG. The Parties remain committed to continuing dialogue to resolve outstanding issues.

SUBSURFACE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Under the Treaty, the Nisga'a Nation retains the rights to all subsurface resources within Nisga'a Lands. During the reporting period, a law firm was retained to assist NLG in developing laws and regulations for the management and development of these resources, including gravel, mineral, and geothermal power. Broad outlines of the new legislation were developed and work continued between these legal specialists and NLG.

NISGA'A INDIVIDUAL LAND HOLDING PROJECT

Holding the title to one's own land offers the potential to generate capital for economic development. Developing nations and their citizens are crippled by their inability to use the title to their lands as a means of raising capital. No longer bound by the *Indian Act*, this should not be the case for the Nisga'a Nation or its citizens. Yet Nisga'a citizens have been unable to benefit from the equity in their homes and Nisga'a Villages have been unable to capitalize on their assets. The Nisga'a Individual Land Holding Project aims to change this.

Unrestricted fee simple ownership will allow Nisga'a citizens, as property owners, to approach lending institutions for a mortgage without requiring a guarantee from the Nisga'a Nation. Providing Nisga'a citizens with the ability to use their residential properties to raise capital – like other Canadians – will unlock an important resource for supporting economic growth, investment, and increase prosperity for Nisga'a citizens. In support of this initiative, Canada provided NLG with $577,000 in targeted funding.

During the reporting period, NLG continued to develop legislation that will provide individual Nisga'a landholders with the option of ownership of fee simple estates, registered in the Nisga'a land title system, with unrestricted transferability. This legislation includes the:

- *Nisga'a Landholding Transition Act* (passed 2009)
- *Nisga'a Property Law Act*
- *Nisga'a Law and Equity Act*
- *Nisga'a Partition of Property Act*
- *Nisga'a Planning and Zoning Enabling Act,* and
- *Nisga'a Expropriation Act.*

Before the first act was passed, community information meetings were held in each Nisga'a Village and Urban Local. The purpose of these meetings was to explain the draft legislation, give people an opportunity to have their questions answered, and offer feedback. This remaining suite of legislation is scheduled to be considered by WSN in fall 2010.

NISGA'A COMMERCIAL GROUP OF COMPANIES

To ensure the separation between commercial interests and government programs and services, the Nisga'a Nation created Nisga'a corporations to fulfill specific needs, such as marketing fish (Nisga'a Fisheries Ltd.), managing forest resources (Lisims Forest Resources), building a telecommunications infrastructure (enTel), and promoting tourism (NCG Tourism). These businesses are managed through the Nisga'a Commercial Group of Companies (NCG), with a mission to improve and sustain the economic wealth and well-being of the Nisga'a Nation and its citizens by being well managed, profitable, and having a reputation for excellence.

NCG is wholly owned by the Nisga'a Nation, but professionally managed by an independent Board of Directors made up of leading members of the business community who provide a wealth of experience and candid advice:

- Mike Harcourt, Chair
- Jean LaRose, Secretary-treasurer
- Dr. Milton Wong
- Chris McNeil, Vice-chair
- Dr. Brent Mainprize, and
- Dr. Joseph Gosnell.

During the reporting period, visits to the Nass Valley increased significantly. NCG Tourism found that, by the end of July, 1,730 people had visited the Nisga'a tourism information centre compared to 858 people the previous year. School visits increased from five (69 people) to 17 (349 people). Tours of the Nisga'a Lisims Government building were offered, and both Aboriginal Tourism of British Columbia and the Council of Tourism Associations of British Columbia made familiarization trips to the Nass Valley. International travel writers were welcomed, along with a crew from CFTK television, whose footage of the Nass Valley was included in British Columbia's Olympic promotions seen by millions of people at the Vancouver International Airport.

Communications & Intergovernmental Relations /

Simutkws nuum̓, ii sgihl axy̓ookskw loom̓,
wil adigwil nidixdidak̲dim̓ /

We inspire trust and understanding through effective communication

The Communications and Intergovernmental Relations Directorate of Nisg̲a'a Lisims Government works to improve the way government members communicate with each other, Nisg̲a'a citizens, its Treaty partners, and the wider world.

"Communicating – listening to one another – is what will ensure we survive as Nisg̲a'a people. We do this through our songs, our stories, our laws, our way of life." – Ayuukhl Nisg̲a'a

COMMUNICATING WITH CITIZENS

NLG is committed to maintaining open, honest, and effective channels of communication. Showcasing Nisg̲a'a Government's accountability to its own citizens, Special Assemblies are held every two years, where government members report on all areas of governance and public programs. Every Nisg̲a'a citizen has the right to attend and speak at Special Assemblies and the proceedings are webcast to ensure all Nisg̲a'a citizens are able to participate. The directorate also undertakes the following initiatives:

- publishing NLG's monthly newsletter
- publishing, when appropriate, special editions of the newsletter
- maintaining and enhancing the community website (nnkn.ca)
- developing and maintaining websites for major events
- webcasting important events
- broadcasting Nisg̲a'a news and information to Nisg̲a'a Villages, Urban Locals, and Nisg̲a'a institutions, and
- compiling and maintaining a photo gallery of significant events.

The Internet has become an increasingly important communications medium for Nisg̲a'a citizens. The Nisg̲a'a community website receives approximately 7,500 visits every month from over 2,500 people. While the Directorate has no intention of moving away from print media, it is likely that the Internet and digital media will play an increasingly important role.

REACHING THE WIDER WORLD

The Nisg̲a'a Nation does not exist in a vacuum. While some issues and initiatives are specific to Nisg̲a'a citizens, others may have regional, provincial, or national implications. The Nisg̲a'a Final Agreement is a groundbreaking treaty and its implementation is being closely watched by governments and other First Nations across Canada and around the world. Fostering a broad understanding of the Treaty is the goal of the directorate's public relations efforts. This goal is achieved through the production and distribution of information packages, videos (including "One Heart, One Path, One Nation" which premiered at the 2010 Winter Olympics), media alerts, press releases, interviews, and collaborating with Treaty partners (Canada and British Columbia) in the production of this report.

EMERGENCY PLANNING & RESPONSE

The Communications and Intergovernmental Relations Directorate is also responsible for emergency planning and response. In 2005, a National Emergency Response and Recovery Plan was completed. Since then, the directorate has:

- facilitated training for NLG and Nisga'a Village emergency management personnel
- supported Nisga'a Villages in developing their own emergency plans
- coordinated with Nisga'a Villages, regional, and provincial emergency organizations to provide appropriate support during emergent issues
- activated the National Emergency Operations Centre (on necessary occasions), and
- coordinated planning for the Nisga'a Nation's response to the potential 2009–2010 flu pandemic.

NLG'S AFFILIATION WITH THE LAND CLAIMS AGREEMENTS COALITION

NLG is a member of the Land Claims Agreements Coalition, which represents all Aboriginal groups in Canada that have completed modern treaties. The Coalition's primary purpose has been to ensure that comprehensive land claims and associated self-government agreements are respected, honoured, and fully implemented in order to achieve their objectives. Through its participation in the Coalition, NLG has shared its experiences, and frustrations, in working with Canada and British Columbia to implement the Nisga'a Final Agreement.

During the reporting period, NLG President Mitchell Stevens was co-chair of the Coalition and the directorate actively supported his work with the Coalition.

Dimt hugaxam diyeem̓ t an de'entgum̓ /

Our governance and services evolve to meet our people's needs

Guided by Nisga'a culture, and best practices from around the world, Nisga'a Lisims Government works to improve the lives of Nisga'a people. In partnership with the four Nisga'a Village Governments, NLG delivers a wide range of culturally appropriate programs and services in the areas of health, education, social development, local services, and access to justice.

"It is our responsibility to ensure quality, healthy living in our midst. This is achieved by helping each other and showing kindness to each other." – Ayuukhl Nisga'a

NISGA'A VALLEY HEALTH AUTHORITY

Nisga'a Government manages the delivery of healthcare in Nisga'a communities through the Nisga'a Valley Health Authority (NVHA). Registered under the *Societies Act*, the elected body includes representatives from the four Nisga'a Villages and an elected representative from the non-Nisga'a community. NVHA is funded with a $1.3 million investment from Canada. During the reporting period, Canada also contributed $284,000 in targeted health care funding.

Responsible for creating and maintaining facilities and promoting medical and public healthcare programs, NVHA operates a diagnostic centre in New Aiyansh and satellite clinics in the other Nisga'a Villages, providing physician services, home care, cultural community health representatives, and the administration of non-insured health benefits. In recent years, Nisga'a citizens report a high level of satisfaction with health services on Nisga'a Lands and consider NVHA one of the most progressive, efficient, and effective First Nations healthcare organizations in Canada.

During the reporting period, NVHA began offering chiropractic services in the Nass Valley on a trial basis. The service was offered at Gitwinksihlkw and fees were covered by NVHA.

NISGA'A CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

With funding from British Columbia ($1.4 million) and Canada ($4.4 million), NLG provides service options to ensure the protection and well-being of Nisga'a children consistent with both the Ayuukhl Nisga'a and British Columbia statutes and policies. This is achieved through Nisga'a Child and Family Services (NCFS), which works to support Nisga'a families through the promotion and utilization of the Ayuuk. NCFS offices are located in New Aiyansh, Terrace, and Prince Rupert.

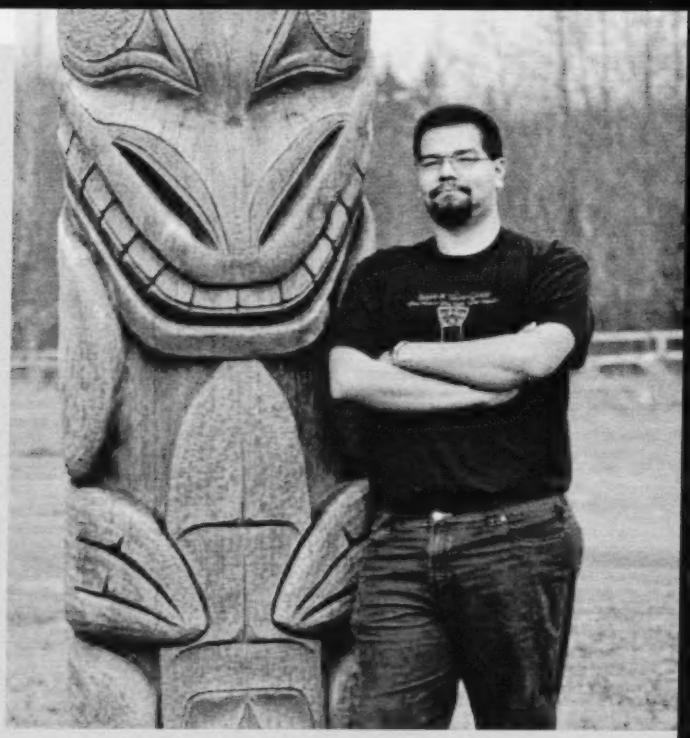
NCFS provides both statutory services (an extension of the child welfare law) and non-statutory services (volunteer community services). NCFS offers support services for families, which promote sound parenting practices and respite care. Voluntary care agreements allow parents to place their children in a safe, approved home during medical treatment or training. Special Needs Agreements ensure the safe care of children with special needs.

NCFS also distributes support payments to families for providing foster care for Nisga'a children in Nisga'a family care homes. Other services include:

- Family Group Conference Program, which provides a venue for alternative family dispute resolution
- Infant Development Program, which benefits children from 0–3 years of age by providing support and education for parents, and
- Supported Child Care Development Program, which supports and provides advocacy for children with special needs.

Sheldon Robinson

Tribe: Killer Whale / Community: Laxgalts'ap



I was 18 years old when the Treaty came into effect. Since then, I've noticed a lot more optimism in our people. They see doors opening to education and work opportunities. Throughout the Nisga'a Nation, there's a sense of pride in our people now. They're holding their heads up high and are proud of who they are.

I work as the Community Wellness Coordinator for the village of Laxgalts'ap. I believe the Treaty has given us more control. At the community level, decision-making is much easier now because we don't have to report back to Ottawa or Victoria to say that we want to build something for our kids. Now, we can actually say, okay – we're going to build this for ourselves and we're going to do it now.

I believe Nisga'a youth see a more positive future for themselves. I think the Treaty has changed their view of things. When I was younger, I was involved in the meetings prior to the Effective Date. I was really hopeful that the Treaty was going to bring us so much more freedom. And I feel that is what the youth of today believe.

I've seen an increase in economic opportunities since the Treaty. There have been a lot more people employed since the Effective Date, be it for short-term or other projects. Now that we have our own government, it also seems a lot easier to get funding to run our programs. What still needs to be done? The one thing I'd really like to see is more of a focus on our youth council, that they be taken more seriously and as part of the decision making process, because it is the youth, and their children, who are going to live out the remainder of the Treaty.

When I was down south in college, one of my friends was working part-time for his tribal council. We always got into debates about treaty negotiations. One day he asked, "Was it really worth it for you guys?" I told him it was. Because doors are opening for us now.

The thing that has surprised me the most about the treaty process was people's reaction when we had to start paying sales tax. Everyone was saying, "I didn't vote for this." And I said, "Yes you did!" We had meeting after meeting informing people about the Treaty. Others are always accusing First Nations people of taking a free ride... Our leaders always said that we negotiated our way into Canada. I believe this is a step in the right direction for us.

When I look ten years down the road, I believe things will be better for the Nisga'a people. I think we will be more into ecotourism and other industries, not leaning so much on forestry. If we were to do that, we would have a very prosperous future.

"...there's a sense of pride in our people now. They're holding their heads up high and are proud of who they are."

*The views expressed by individual Nisga'a citizens do not necessarily represent the views of the governments of Canada, British Columbia, or Nisga'a Lisims Government.

In addition, NCFS provides resources for the following programs:

- Youth Worker Program
- Drug Awareness Resistance Education
- Community Workshops
- Psychological Services
- Speech Therapy
- Family Support Services, and
- Recreation Program.

On April 1, 2009, the new Fiscal Financing Agreement (FFA) came into effect providing financial certainty and stabilization for core programs delivered through NCFS. This, coupled with the transfer of contract funding from British Columbia's Ministry of Child and Family Development into the updated FFA, helped provide a solid foundation for the planning and work of NCFS. During the reporting period, Canada also provided an additional $25,000 in targeted funding to support special foster care project work managed by NCFS.

FISCAL FINANCING AGREEMENT

The Treaty requires the Parties to enter into a Fiscal Financing Agreement describing the financial relationship among the Parties. The FFA sets out funding amounts from Canada and British Columbia to NLG for supporting agreed-upon government programs and services, and for supporting treaty implementation activities. The FFA also sets out terms, conditions, and reporting requirements for transfer payments.

Canada pays approximately $60.3 million each year as a block-fund for federally-supported programs and services, including: education, social development, health, physical works, local government, and non-commercial fisheries. British Columbia pays $1,926,063. All federal and provincial transfers were completed on time. Canada and British Columbia may also provide additional program or project funding to NLG to support specific initiatives; these funding amounts are indicated in relevant sections of this annual report.

The previous FFA was due to expire on March 31, 2006. However, in accordance with its provisions, it was automatically extended to March 31, 2008. Through a series of presentations culminating on December 23, 2005, NLG provided Canada and British Columbia with its submission for the global funding it sought for agreed-upon public programs and services to be provided under a further FFA. Over the next three years, tripartite work continued in preparation of a new draft fiscal financing agreement to replace the existing FFA. Throughout much of this time, the Nisga'a Nation continued to be informed by federal representatives that Canada needed to secure a mandate to negotiate a new agreement. In the opinion of NLG, this delay resulted in a financial cost to the Nisga'a Nation.

By March 31, 2009, Canada was in a position to provide a formal response to the Nisga'a Nation's December 2005 submission. The Parties made arrangements for Canada and British Columbia to provide their responses, complete negotiations, and conclude the further fiscal financing agreement. Negotiations began in April 2009 and continued for ten months. After technical and legal reviews were completed, the Nisga'a Nation Fiscal Financing Agreement, retroactive to April 1, 2009 was signed by the Nisga'a Nation, British Columbia, and Canada on February 26, 2010. The term of the new FFA is six years with effective dates of April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2015.

NISGA'A NATION DELIVERY SERVICES AGREEMENT

During the reporting period, negotiations concluded for a new Nisga'a Nation Delivery Services Agreement, which provides authority for the delivery of Delegated Services by Nisga'a Child and Family Services (NCFS) staff throughout the Northwest Corridor. Under the agreement, a joint advisory committee was established, and NCFS is obligated to maintain an administrative structure meeting standards set by British Columbia. Through the agreement, British Columbia will also assist NCFS in providing delegated services to Nisga'a children beyond the Northwest Corridor. The agreement is designed to ensure that Nisga'a values are applied whenever delegated staff provide services to children in care.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

NLG is committed to supporting healthy and economically prosperous Nisga'a communities where children, youth, and adults have hope and opportunities, and access to social programs that support a healthy living standard. This is accomplished by developing individual and family strengths and by providing access to social services that will enhance their self-sufficiency. As social policies are continuously evolving, NLG keeps apprised of any provincial changes and ensures NLG's policies and services are reasonably comparable to those available to residents elsewhere in British Columbia. The following programs are funded through the FFA:

- Basic Needs
- Training Employment Support
- Special Needs
- Family Violence Prevention
- Guardian Financial Assistance
- Community Support Services
- Adult In-Home Care
- National Child Benefit Reinvestment
- Employment Initiatives, and
- Community Preventative Services.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

NLG's Access to Justice Department works to involve every Nisga'a citizen in promoting safety by building on the strengths of individuals, families, and communities. The Justice Department supports the prevention and resolution of conflicts by increasing awareness of the Nisga'a Ayuuk and Canadian laws through the following programs.

- The Aboriginal Justice Program assists the justice system in improving its relevance and effectiveness in Nisga'a communities; encourages the revival of traditional Nisga'a practices in resolving conflict; develops alternative programming to deal with deterrence and prevention, diversion, sentencing, rehabilitation, and incarceration; and encourages crime prevention through information, education, and community development programming with Nisga'a communities. (Funded $74,718 annually from British Columbia.)
- The Yuuhlimk'askw Program and Youth Justice Program provide culturally appropriate alternative justice solutions and help Nisga'a communities effectively respond to youth justice issues/needs. (Funded $87,890 annually from Canada.)
- The Nass Valley Victim Services Program provides emotional support to victims of crime during their recovery and involvement with the justice process. (Funded $35,000 annually by British Columbia.)

NISGA'A REGISTRY OF LAWS

The Nisga'a Registry of laws is housed in NLG's offices and is available to the public. Updated on a regular basis, the Registry consists of 167 laws, regulations, and amendments currently in force, which are now available on NLG websites at: www.nisgaalisims.ca and www.nnkn.ca. During the reporting period, WSN amended and/or reenacted the following legislation:

Nisga'a Community Planning and Zoning Enabling Act, NLGSR 2010/01
Nisga'a Nation Entitlement Amendment Act, NLGSR 2010/02
Nisga'a Forest Amendment Act, 2010, NLGSR 2010/03

CONSUMER TAXATION

In accordance with the Nisga'a Final Agreement, relief from consumption taxes — in the form of remission orders — expired, on June 1, 2008, for all persons within Nisga'a Lands and for Nisga'a citizens anywhere in Canada.

Governments levy taxes within their jurisdictions to provide services and enhance the quality of life for their citizens. During the reporting period, NLG, Canada, and British Columbia negotiated and completed tax sharing agreements

to ensure that taxes paid by Nisga'a citizens and businesses flow back to Nisga'a Government. Provincial consumption tax revenue flows to Nisga'a Village Governments as general funding. An outstanding issue regarding federal consumption tax revenue and the application of Own Source Revenue tax remained under discussion between NLG and Canada.

PROPERTY TAXATION

Property taxation will begin on Nisga'a Lands January 1, 2013. During the reporting period, a preliminary review of property taxation and its effects on Nisga'a citizens was completed. If the *Provincial Property Taxation Act* is mirrored by NLG (i.e. utilizing the same taxation rates and making available the same home owners grants), and if the assessed value of homes is less than $125,000, many Nisga'a homeowners will only be liable for minimum taxation ($350 for the average homeowner and $100 for elders aged 65 or older).

The next step in this process is to determine whether NLG will administer its own property tax or if British Columbia will administer it. A more comprehensive financial review of the property taxation system is needed – one which includes precise estimates of revenues compared with the cost of implementing a property tax system, plus the annual costs of administration and collection. When complete, this review will be presented to WSN.

INCOME TAXATION

As with consumer and property tax, Nisga'a citizens will no longer be exempt from income tax effective January 1, 2013. During the reporting period, NLG – in conjunction with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) – provided for an income tax preparation course to help educate Nisga'a citizens. The program taught participants the process of completing basic tax returns and the benefits for low income individuals. NLG and CRA plan to offer this course again at the beginning of 2011.

TREATY LOAN REFINANCING

During the reporting period, the Nisga'a Nation refinanced the Nisga'a Nation Treaty Loan. This was done in order to take advantage of historically low commercial financing rates. Where the Treaty provided for repayment of the loan at a rate of just over 5%, NLG was able to negotiate a floating rate of just under 2%. This is expected to save the Nisga'a Nation $1–2 million in interest costs over the remaining term of the loan.

NISGA'A SETTLEMENT TRUST

Under the Treaty, the capital transfer to the Nisga'a Nation is paid over 14 years. NLG has developed a risk budgeting framework for these funds, known as the Nisga'a Settlement Trust.

Where other elected administrations routinely plan four to five years into the future, the primary goal of the Nisga'a Settlement Trust is to provide financial stability to the Nisga'a Nation through the seventh generation. One of the challenges is balancing the preservation of capital with earning a sufficient return to accomplish this goal. It is imperative that the funds in trust maintain their value and be invested in a manner that earns a rate of return greater than inflation.

Since 2008, the world economy has seen major turbulence. This has resulted in tumultuous and volatile equity markets that have completely rewritten many long held assumptions of how markets act and react. During the crisis, equity markets lost between 20–50% of their value. In comparison, the Nisga'a Interim Settlement Trust experienced a 16% reduction in its value in 2008 and has since regained this loss. There are many indications that the recession is over, although fear of further instability or a slow recovery remain.

During the reporting period, NLG began a performance review of the Trust. The target return was 5% and this target was slightly exceeded despite market turmoil. NLG also undertook a review of the Trust's investment policy to determine where asset mixes can be altered to provide a reduction in volatility.

Starnita Nyce

Tribe: Raven / Community: Gitwinksihlkw

Starnita: I go to Gitwinksihlkw Elementary School (GES). Right now, we're studying science and punctuation. My favorite class is cursive. I'm pretty good at it. We're also learning to use laptop computers. And we're learning the Nisga'a language. When I finish school, I might become a teacher at GES. I want to become a teacher so I can help kids.

The Nisga'a Treaty? It started in 2000, before I was born. My dad, mom, aunties, and many other people all worked on the Treaty. And now, my dad still works on it through Nisga'a Government. The Treaty means an agreement with the governments of Canada and B.C.

Mom Lori: Starnita was born about 11 months into the Treaty. Around that time, I remember totem poles being raised. There was a lot of excitement and interest in the community, a lot of people looking forward to the future.

I'm from Haida Gwaii. I moved here in 1994 and I've been working for WWNI ever since. One big difference I've noticed is with education. Now Nisga'a people don't have to leave home to get their education or training. They can continue to participate in the culture, to learn from the elders, and then incorporate their education into their culture.

When I go home to Haida Gwaii, I tell them that the Nisga'a Treaty has been good for the Nisga'a people. It has definitely changed the quality of life for the better. It has changed how people live. They have a healthier, more positive outlook... The Nisga'a Highway has opened up the valley for people who have work or business in Terrace. We're not so isolated anymore. Rural, yes, but not isolated. But the Treaty is relatively new. It's only been ten years, so there's still a lot more to come. I think Starnita is going to see more of it as she grows up.

I believe the culture defines who you are. It's important that young people learn the language and culture so they can know who they are, and be confident in what they do... You know, Starnita won an award for the Nisga'a language at the elementary school. She gave a speech in Nisga'a last week.

Starnita: Want to hear it?
Way Simgiigat, Sigidim Haanak,
kuba wilksihlkw ganhl txaanitkws kubatk'ihlkw
Laxikstaa 'm B'ilist hl way
Ksim Ganada niiy
Gitwinksihlkw wil jogay
Wilps Ksim Xsaan wil witgwiy
Hlgu Ksim Ganaaw wahl nooy ii Sim'oogit K'am Hi Aam
wahl nigwoodiy.

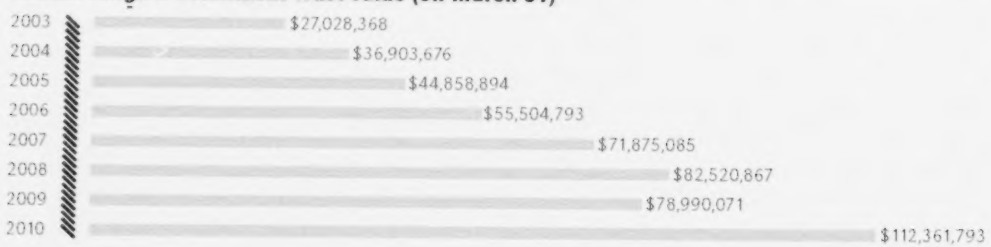
(translation)
Chiefs, Matriarchs, princes and princesses,
and especially the children,
My name is Island Star
I am in the Raven Clan
I live in Gitwinksihlkw
I come from the House of Ksim Xsaan
Small Lady Frog is my mother and Chief K'am Hi Aam
is my father.

Thank you.

"Chiefs, Matriarchs, princes and princesses, and especially the children,
My name is Island Star..."

*The views expressed by individual Nisga'a citizens do not necessarily represent the views of the governments of Canada, British Columbia, or Nisga'a Lisims Government.

Annual Nisga'a Settlement Trust value (on March 31)



TREATY AMENDMENTS

During the reporting period, NLG, Canada, and British Columbia worked on various amendments to the Nisga'a Final Agreement. Many of the amendments are required to address various typographical errors inadvertently included in the Treaty, and to make changes that were contemplated in the original terms of the Treaty.

YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT

From time immemorial, Nisga'a elders have selected youth and trained them to become leaders of their respective wilps (houses). In keeping with this tradition, Nisga'a Government continues to engage and train the leaders of tomorrow.

NLG is committed to improving access for Nisga'a youth to programs and services by involving them in the social and economic decision-making of government. This is accomplished through the Nisga'a Youth Advisory Council (NYAC). Each Nisga'a Village and each Nisga'a Urban Local has its own Youth Council, which sends a representative to the seven-member NYAC. During the reporting period, Nisga'a Youth Councils conducted two membership meetings and two Village Government meetings. NLG has also created a Youth Organizing Youth position dedicated to providing technical support to NYAC.

Nisga'a youth were proud ambassadors of the Nisga'a Nation at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. Nisga'a youth performed at the Admiral Seymour Elementary School as well as back-to-back performances at the Four Host First Nations Aboriginal Pavilion in the heart of downtown Vancouver. The performances included a blend of cultural dancing and singing, with a contemporary band and choral pieces accompanied by narration on Nisga'a history. The performances were well received by family and friends, other Aboriginal groups, and visitors from around the world.

NISGA'A LISIMS GOVERNMENT — SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

All amounts are in the March 31, 2010, audited financial statements or have been calculated from those statements. These statements are available to all Nisga'a citizens by appointment. This summary has been audited.

FINANCIAL ASSETS	2010	2009
Cash and other current assets	**$ 45,056,693**	$ 28,993,499
Other long-term receivables	**417,953**	481,059
Nisga'a Financial Agreement proceeds receivable	**79,230,331**	96,764,618
Capital Finance Commission receivable	**14,458,536**	
Designated cash	**21,126,140**	21,352,938
Designated trust funds	**108,512,583**	95,062,156
Investments in other entities	**2,269,564**	1,584,973
Total Financial Assets	**271,071,800**	244,239,243
LIABILITIES		
Bank indebtedness and other current liabilities	**26,262,743**	19,003,327
Silviculture liability	**973,170**	846,841
Due to other entities	**1,805,560**	1,433,276
Capital Finance Commission deferred revenue and other grants	**38,711,965**	24,195,112
Nisga'a Final Agreement debt payable	—	44,197,214
Treaty debt payable	**36,624,943**	—
Long-term debt	**2,897,388**	2,840
Total liabilities	**107,275,769**	89,678,610
Net financial assets	**163,796,031**	154,560,633
Non-financial assets		
Tangible capital assets	**16,480,218**	12,509,470
Other non-financial assets	**481,309**	1,192,075
Total non-financial assets	**16,961,527**	13,701,545
Accumulated surplus	**180,757,558**	168,262,178

SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

REVENUE		
Fiscal Financing Agreement and related funding	**$ 56,835,390**	$ 42,213,489
Other revenues	**11,641,239**	10,553,917
Interest income on Final Agreement	**5,233,336**	5,957,558
Targeted Funding — INAC	**4,399,613**	3,485,470
Total	**78,109,578**	62,210,434
Operating Expenses	**20,850,983**	20,508,598
Transfers and operating grants		
Nisga'a Village Governments	**21,326,739**	14,888,670
Nisga'a Valley Health Authority	**13,067,611**	12,351,696
Nisga'a School Board #92	**8,094,544**	6,908,927
Nisga'a Urban Locals	**1,669,569**	1,363,308
Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a	**604,752**	417,475
Total	**44,763,215**	35,930,076
Total expenses	**65,614,198**	56,438,674
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses	**12,495,380**	5,771,760
Accumulated surplus, beginning of year	**168,262,178**	162,490,418
Accumulated surplus, end of year	**180,757,558**	168,262,178

NISGA'A LISIMS GOVERNMENT – TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

A pillar in the foundation of good governance is a government's ability to maintain transparency and accountability in its day-to-day operation. The *Constitution of the Nisga'a Nation* (Nisga'a Constitution) came into effect on May 11, 2000, and provides for the establishment of Nisga'a Lisims Government, each of the four Nisga'a Village Governments, and the three Nisga'a Urban Locals. The Nisga'a Constitution further called for the establishment of Nisga'a Laws, which, among other things, contain provisions for transparency and accountability in government decision-making and financial administration.

One of 167 laws enacted since the Effective Date, the *Nisga'a Government Act* stipulates requirements for the frequency of meetings of various bodies, such as Wilp Si'ayuukhl Nisga'a (WSN), the NLG Executive, the Council of Elders, and all other House committees of Nisga'a Government. The *Nisga'a Government Act* also enforces the Members' Code of Conduct, which specifies requirements with respect to the conduct of each elected and appointed Nisga'a representative while serving in their official capacity.

The Nisga'a Government's standards of financial administration are comparable to standards generally accepted for governments in Canada. There are requirements in Nisga'a Laws for budgets, quarterly reports, annual reports, and audits of the financial activities of Nisga'a Government and Nisga'a Public Institutions. The *Nisga'a Financial Administration Act* stipulates details for oversight, management and control of all financial matters of the Nisga'a Nation, Nisga'a Government, and Nisga'a Public Institutions. Under the *Nisga'a Financial Administration Act* there must be an annual independent audit of financial statements of Nisga'a Government and Nisga'a Public Institutions which is made available for inspection by Nisga'a citizens and is available on Nisga'a Lisims Government websites: www.nisgaalisims.ca and www.nnkn.ca.

The Nisga'a Nation is also accountable to the governments of Canada and British Columbia for the funding provided by those governments and fulfills this obligation by submitting reports and audits, annually or as required.

These two maps are representational and not to scale and are for general information purposes only.

The Nisga'a Final Agreement (the Treaty) is British Columbia's first modern treaty. A landmark in the relationship between Canada and its First Nations peoples, the Treaty came into effect on May 11, 2000.

The governments of Canada, British Columbia, and the Nisga'a Nation are partners in the Nisga'a Final Agreement, which sets out Nisga'a Lands and the Nisga'a people's right of self-government. Because three governments share responsibility for the Treaty, an implementation committee was formed to provide a forum for the partners to discuss its implementation. This report summarizes the progress made in the ninth year of the Nisga'a Final Agreement, from April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010.

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- Nisga'a Lisims Government at 250-633-3000 or www.nisgaalisims.ca

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